G. R. S. IX-5]

Previous references.

1926

(L/B)

File No. 26-26

Serial Nos 84

Later references.

GENERAL AND REVENUE SECRETARIAT.

Serial Nos.

Part B for Nov 26

SUBJECT.

Report on the Administration of Village Panchayets in the Madras Presidency.

84 To, The Deputy Commissioners of Districts
The Superintendent Government Press
The Heads of Departments
No L 3032-9/d 12.11.26

Publishes extracts from the report on the Administration of Village Panchayets in the Madras Presidency for the information of Village Panchayets in the State

WD 1888—GPB—16,826—23-7-21

L.L Seals

Please draw for Madras
a copy of the Village
Panchayat Rep Seal's
(Dept Seal?) report
for one year (reviewed
in March of 31st July)

Lee
2/8

SA
2/8.

Mean wanted
for action

2/8.

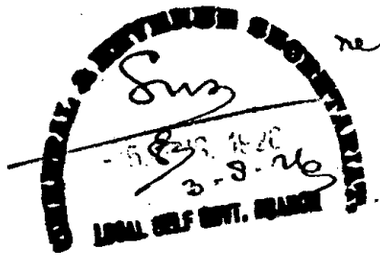
Mr SS Desai
2/8

Submitted with a draft for approval

2/8/26

2/8

Issued
vide L 846 of 3.8.26. To see Asst
Secy to Govt. L. S. G. Deptt. Madras
Request him to send a copy of the
report



D.No. 679 L

G.R.S. III—3]

Routine Notes.

[To be used only for notes, requisitions, etc., not intended for permanent record.]

D.No 679

Letter no. 22832-1 A2 dtd 7.8.26 from the Asst Secy to Govt. Local Self-Govt Deptt. Madras, forwarding a copy of the administration report of village Panchayats in the Madras Presidency for 1924-25.

orders give Asst Secy on P.W.D. "please acknowledge with thanks and also submit with" file.

Sd/- J.K.S.
11/8/26

Important portions have been marked. Draft acknowledging the receipt of the report is put up for approval

Sd/- 12.8.26

Sd/- 12/8

Issued vide L 1118 dt 14/8/26. To the Asst Secy. L.S.G. Deptt. Madras Acknowledges the receipt of the Copy of the report.

Resubmitted after issue

Sd/- 14/8/26

Issue & Resubmit

N.B.—Should routine notes be written on small slips, the notes must be copied, or slips pasted on this form.

(3)

679

G.R.S. III—31

Routine Notes.

[To be used only for notes, requisitions, etc., not intended for permanent record.]

As desired by Mr Hunter a copy of the Report of the Registrar of Panchayats in Madras on the working of the Village Panchayats in the Madras Presidency for 1924-25 and review thereon is placed below

Fredk Hunter / 28/8/1926. 1962 16.8.

The H.P. Assistant may please mark all portions to be extracted, reprinted & sent to all our D.Cs providing copies under Rule 1 (1) Work actually done by Panchayats - other kinds (2) Cost saved — in staff, lighting, roads etc.

If necessary Madras for more up-to-date report

GE 19/8

Secretariat for further action 28/8/19 19/8

A draft letter with suitable extracts from the report is put up for the issue of

N.B.—Should routine notes be written on small slips, the notes must be copied, or slips pasted on this form

4/10/26 45549 30/10

29/10 30/10 30/10 4/11

5794

4

G.R.S. III—3]

Routine Notes.

[To be used only for notes, requisitions, etc., not intended for permanent record.]

For favour of move

L&G)

2/11

3/11

Type

8/11

No L 3032-9 'LB 26-26-84 of 12.11.26.

To

The Superintendent, Govt. Press

" Heads of Depts

Copy to Translation Section

Forwards extracts from the Report on the administration of the Panchayats in Madras and the information of the Panchayats to be communicated from 1.2.27.

N.B.—Should routine notes be written on small slips, the notes must be copied, or slips pasted on this form.

Notes & orders in file forwarded

29.

APP. F. VI. Gl.]

5-

SUBJECT.....

.....

.....

Section LB

File No.

Serial No

Diary No. of letter replied to 5324

No. 846.

To

.....

General and Revenue Secretariat

( )

the *192*

Dear Sir.

I am desired to request you to be so good as to send a copy of the Village Panchayet Registrar general report for the last year. (reviewed in Hindu of 31st July)

Yours Sincerely.

3/8

Date of issue 3/8/26

Signed by Mr T.K.S.

Asst Secy. Local & Legis Depts.

List of enclosures.....

To

The Assistant Secretary to

Local self govt Deptt

for St George

Copied by.....

over Madras

Examined by.....

8/8

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

GENERAL & REVENUE SECRETARIAT
6796
11 AUG

Local Self Government Department.

No. 22832-1 A2 L & M., 26

From

Muhammad Kalim Ali Ansari Sahib Bahadur,

Assistant Secretary to the Government of Madras.

To

The Assistant Secretary,

Local and Legislative Department,

General and Revenue Secretariat,

BANGALORE.

Dated 7.th Aug. 1926.

Sir,

Reference: Your letter L.846 dated 3rd August 1926.

***

I enclose a copy of G.O. No.2645 L & M., dated 22nd June 1926 containing the administration report of Village Panchayats in the Madras Presidency for the year 1924-25.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

Muhammad 10.8.26

Assistant Secretary to Government.

T.D.G.

Government of Madras

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT

(Local and Municipal)

G.O. No. 2645, L. & M., 22nd June 1926

Village panchayats—Administration report—1924-25—Recorded.

READ—the following paper :—

Letter from M.R.Ry. Rai Bahadur N. GOPALASWAMI AYYANGAR Avargal, B.A., B.L., Registrar-General of Panchayats, dated 2nd February 1926, No. D. Dis. 85.

[Village panchayats—Madras Presidency—Administration report—1924-25.]

I have the honour to submit the following report on the administration of village panchayats in the Madras Presidency for the year ending 31st March 1925.

Under the rules, every panchayat has to submit to me a report on its administration and detailed instructions have been issued as to how and when it should be prepared and submitted. The panchayats being, however, infant institutions, require not merely guidance and assistance but some experience before they can be expected to submit reports in time and with all the prescribed details. Administration reports have yet to be received from a large number of panchayats which had come into being in 1924-25 and those which have been received and reviewed by me, have several of them been incomplete in information and have not conformed to the instructions issued. The present report has therefore necessarily to be of a general character being based upon my own personal observation and knowledge and such information as is available in my office.

2. The year 1924-25 opened with the number at 329 of the panchayats whose constitution had been ordered; the corresponding number at the end of the year was 579. The constitution of one panchayat in the Coimbatore district had to be cancelled during the year and 251 panchayats were ordered to be constituted in 16 districts.

Of this total, nearly a fourth may be estimated as not having functioned during the year, either because elections of panchayatdars and presidents had not been completed within the year in the case of the panchayats whose constitution was ordered towards the close of the year, or because village apathy and even opposition got the better of the persons elected and no work was done. The Act, as it stands, enables the Government only to order the constitution or the abolition of a panchayat but reserves no power to compel the functioning of an apathetic or recalcitrant body of panchayatdars. The bait of financial help from outside might have temporarily got over the apathy or opposition, but I was not during the year in a position to offer it. A personal appeal to civic patriotism and an emphasis on the need for reviving, in the interests of the future of the country, the re-establishment of village governing bodies entirely self-reliant in matters of local concern had their effect in places. But when appeals and verbal coaxing failed, as they did in several villages, and panchayats continued to remain idle, we could only look on waiting for more propitious conditions to shake them into activity.

The 579 panchayats at the end of the year were distributed as follows among the various districts :—

Anantapur	81	Cuddapah	2	Malabar	1
North Arcot	153	Gōdāvari	9	Trichinopoly	28
South Arcot	37	Guntūr	4	Nellore	10
Bellary	11	South Kanara	4	Ramnad	20
Chingleput	18	Kistna	22	Salem	28
Chittoor	33	Kurnool	9	Tanjore	42
Coimbatore	25	Madura	14	Tinnevelly	28

The varying rate of progress in different districts has to be attributed to the varying degrees of enthusiasm or apathy on the part of honorary workers on whose assistance alone I have had to depend—both presidents of taluk boards and honorary organizers of panchayats. The considerable number in the Anantapur district is mostly confined to the Anantapur taluk board area and is due to the enthusiasm and hard work done by the then president of that taluk board. The numbers in the Tanjore district and North Arcot district are due to the excellent work done by honorary organizers in those districts. In North Arcot especially, an intensive campaign was set on foot towards the close of the year under report in the Polur taluk, the object aimed at being the establishment of a panchayat in every village of that taluk. The campaign proved successful and, by the end of the year, there was hardly a single village in that taluk—leaving aside the villages on the Javadi Hills—which was not included within the jurisdiction of some panchayat or other. This result was achieved with the assistance of a small band of three organizers under the direction of a capable and energetic Chief Honorary Organizer. The large number of panchayats constituted in this area were then divided into groups of about 12 each, each group being placed under a group organizer for purposes of intensive development of the work of these bodies.

It has to be remembered that honorary organizers have so far been working without any remuneration, not even their out-of-pocket expenses when travelling on panchayat work being reimbursed to them. The work they have turned out has thus been a labour of love motived solely by their faith in the efficacy of the institutions they have helped to bring into being.

3. The Act as it stands at present does not require the consent of the villagers before a panchayat is ordered to be constituted. Such consent is however taken invariably now in writing with a view to ensure the smooth working of the panchayat after it is ordered. In a very few cases, however, the villagers after first signing an application have changed their mind and have refused to meet and elect panchayatdars in spite of repeated attempts. The present Act is defective in not providing a remedy for a contingency of this kind, but the defect will be removed after the amendments already proposed become law. Pending such amendment, cases of this kind have been allowed to lie over. The number of such cases during 1924–25 was 16.

4. No change in the jurisdiction of any panchayat was ordered during 1924–25. The strength of 16 panchayats was raised at the request of the panchayatdars and villagers concerned.

5. Elections have on the whole been held smoothly. They have been conducted by presidents or members of taluk boards and by honorary organizers. Though no rules were in force during the year for the decision of disputes regarding the validity of elections, the few objection petitions that were received were duly inquired into but in no case was it found necessary to interfere. The suit filed in the previous year in the Sivaganga Munsif's Court in respect of the election of the president and certain panchayatdars of the Tiruchuli Panchayat abated during the year on account of the death of the plaintiff.

6. The elections held everywhere have given general satisfaction. In most villages, the voters have proceeded on the principle—well recognized in all village common affairs—of each important community being represented on the panchayat. In many places, by previous informal agreement, only as many candidates as there are seats have been nominated, all of them being declared elected without a poll. Though Adi-Dravidas have not secured seats on many panchayats where their numbers justified their representation, it will be a mistake to suppose that they cannot obtain representation through election. Under the Madras Village Panchayat Act, 1920, every male resident of a village who is not less than 25 years old is entitled not only to vote but to stand for election and if the Adi-Dravida community is properly apprised of its privileges, in this respect, it should be able to obtain reasonable representation on panchayats through election. As a matter of fact, so far as information is available now in my office, they have been elected to seats on seven panchayats and in two of them they hold the majority of seats.

7. A considerable number of panchayats, including a few which did specially active work, failed to conform to the rule that requires them to meet at least once a month. The meetings held have however generally been well attended. Persistent default in attending meetings on the part of individual panchyatdars was reported in a few cases, but only in two cases was it found necessary to remove them under section 11 (*b*) on the ground that by their conduct they had refused to act as panchayatdars. This extreme step was taken only after a warning and a subsequent notice to show cause against removal.

8. The expenditure on office staff, accommodation and management has been kept at a minimum. The tendency to employ full-timed clerks and to build or rent accommodation for the location of the panchayat office or the holding of meetings has been steadily discouraged. Panchayats have been instructed to hold their meetings and office in a place accessible to all communities. The board elementary school, the village chavadi, a public chatram, the platform under the village banyan tree, the space in front of a village temple, the president's house—these and similar places are used for meetings. The scriptory work of panchayats is small; the forms and accounts prescribed are few and simple. They are in the great majority of panchayats done without any remuneration by the president or a panchayatdar. Where the volume of writing work in individual cases was found to be more than could be managed in this way, it was generally done by the local karnam or schoolmaster for a small remuneration not exceeding Rs. 5 a month. Full-timed clerks are employed, however, by a few panchayats, especially in areas where they have replaced unions under the Madras Local Boards Act, 1920.

9. Except in about seven cases, no bill-collectors or other staff are employed by panchayats for collection work. All of them have now begun to use the village headman—under the Village Panchayat Collection Rules—either for collecting all their dues or for realising the arrears due from defaulters only. It is worthy of note that several village headmen, especially those who are presidents or members of panchayats, have done this work without claiming even the commission of one anna in the rupee of collection which is under the rules payable to them. On the other hand, owing to a defective understanding of their statutory obligations in respect of this matter, village headmen, particularly those who failed to get elected either as panchayatdars or presidents, either refused or delayed collections in a number of instances. Cases of this kind were taken to the notice of the Collector or Revenue Divisional Officers concerned. Village headmen are thus slowly settling down to their duties under the Panchayat Act.

10. The exercise of the functions referred to in sections 15 to 20 of the Act is now entirely optional with panchayats. They have the utmost latitude in choosing what they will attend to and what they will not for the time being. While there is a considerable number of panchayats which function regularly like union boards, there are others which have contented themselves with doing during the year only kudimaramath work to the irrigation tank or channel and have not attempted doing anything else. The activities of panchayats have thus not been uniform, but nearly every one of the functions specifically referred to in the Act has been attempted by some panchayat or other.

11. Many panchayats attended during the year to the repair of village streets and roads and to the clearance of prickly-pear which had overwhelmed and practically obliterated village footpaths and cart-tracks. These clearances and repairs have been largely executed by mobilising village labour on the kudimaramath principle. Special taxes have been levied by some panchayats for specified works. For example, owners of carts were taxed in one village for financing the construction of culverts. One panchayat raised a tax on houses for meeting the cost of doing the earthwork required for a new road. All cultivated lands were laid under contribution for a similar purpose, in certain other panchayat areas. The maintenance of maintained village roads was taken over by certain panchayats, the usual allotments being made over to them as a contribution by the taluk board concerned. One panchayat undertook on behalf of the taluk board the execution of the work of repairing a road seriously damaged by floods and of forming a new road and during the year did work to the value of Rs. 2,098.

12. Panchayats had not during the year begun active work in the direction of planting avenue trees. Coconut plants were planted in village streets in stray cases and one panchayat in the Tinnevelly district had planted and was carefully rearing a series of margosa trees in its streets which are otherwise bare of any vegetation. The transfer on terms agreed upon of trees on district and taluk board roads to panchayats within their limits has been advised. One panchayat in North Arcot applied for such a transfer during the year undertaking to pay annually to the district board its average income from such trees during the previous five years.

13. The provision of lighting at nights has not yet become general among panchayats. Several of them have however provided this convenience, and different panchayats have adopted different devices for meeting the cost of this service. One panchayat alone levied a special tax on the residents for this purpose. In a considerable number, the cost of lighting was met out of the general resources of the panchayat as in unions. In a few areas, lamp posts and lights have been received as gifts from the well-to-do, the cost of looking after, maintaining and lighting the lamps being thrown on the residents of the streets served by particular lamps.

14. The number of panchayats which have taken over the control of chatrams and chavadies is yet small but is bound to grow. One panchayat in South Kanara is managing a chatram and levying fees for its occupation. Another in South Arcot has applied for the transfer of the assets of a disused choultry for the purpose of improving water-supply and providing lighting in the village.

15. Under G.O. No. 1424, Law (Education), dated 8th October 1923, the duty of exercising supervision over aided elementary schools in a panchayat area devolves automatically on the panchayat and inspecting officers of the Education department are required to consult panchayats and obtain their opinion before recommending the annual grants for such schools. This order has been carried out by panchayats and educational officers only in a few cases. In the great majority of cases, however, its provisions have not been taken advantage of, apparently owing to ignorance on the part of the panchayat of its powers and duties and to lack of information on the part of inspecting educational officers of the working of panchayats formed under Madras Act XV of 1920. Things are bound to improve in the future.

16. With the approval of Government, I issued in my R. Dis. No. 330, dated 10th November 1923, a set of model conditions subject to which taluk boards might under section 16 (vi) of the Act transfer the supervision of their schools to panchayats. A large number of panchayats exercised such supervision and several of them brought about both increase in strength and improvement in efficiency in the institutions entrusted to them. The panchayat of Nattarampalle in the North Arcot district was foremost in this respect. It provided at its own cost an extension of the school building, spent sums frequently for small items of improvement, took an intelligent interest and displayed helpful activity in the progress of the institution which is a Higher Grade Elementary School with nine teachers. Another panchayat in the same district was entrusted with the supervision of a board school the strength of which did not justify the employment of even half the number of teachers that were actually employed therein. The panchayatdars hit upon a novel but effective device for increasing the strength. With the teachers and pupils of the institution they started in procession after a bath, dressed in clean clothes, wearing each his caste mark conspicuously on his forehead and with the village band playing in front. As they went round the streets, they stopped at each house and if after inquiry they found a boy of school-going age not attending school a garland was placed round his neck and he was made to join the procession. When they reached the school-house, the boys with the garlands on were formally enrolled as pupils of the institution and it was found that the strength of the school was thereby increased by more than 50 per cent. Other panchayats have done similar work though not in so spectacular a fashion. There have no doubt been two or three stray instances of school committees attempting to overstep the limits set for them and to intervene in the administration of the board school in spheres which are excluded from their cognizance. But these have been sharply pulled up.

17. A few taluk boards have however followed a hesitating policy in this matter and have either refused to accept the offer made by panchayats or postponed indefinitely its consideration on the ground that they are still new. It is hoped

that this disinclination and nervousness will soon disappear. There can be no doubt that until the representatives of the people of the locality for which an elementary school caters are effectively associated with its management and administration, the institution is bound to suffer in popularity and efficiency.

18. A remarkable index of panchayat interest in matters of elementary education during the year was the receipt by me of resolutions from a considerable number of panchayats requesting that elementary education should be made compulsory in their areas. Detailed schemes for this purpose were submitted to Government during the year in respect of three panchayat areas. The policy of Government as regards the introduction of compulsion in individual villages was still under their consideration at the end of the year. But the area of one panchayat in the Malabar district came under compulsion as the result of its introduction in the taluk board area of which it forms a part.

19. Several panchayats maintained elementary schools at their own cost during the year, some of them obtaining grants from the district educational councils on the same terms as private schools.

20. A few panchayats maintained libraries and one of them which subscribes for newspapers and periodicals regularly circulated them to five other panchayats in the neighbourhood.

21. Narayanavanam in the Chittoor district maintained an Ayurvedic dispensary and 11,891 patients were treated during the year. The cost was Rs. 548-14-1 of which the panchayat found Rs. 311-13-0, the balance being received as a contribution from the taluk board. The dispensary has ceased to exist during the current year as the local board was unable to continue the contribution and the Government refused an application for aid. Requests for Government aid from a few other panchayats have had to be turned down or discouraged. The Tiruppandiyur panchayat in the Chingleput district opened a dispensary in charge of a retired compounder during the last quarter of the year and about 150 persons are reported to have been treated during the period for minor ailments and injuries. The amount spent by the panchayat during the year was Rs. 10-7-6. This dispensary has also languished during the current year for lack of outside support. Under the auspices of the Ambalur panchayat (North Arcot district) a village *vaidyan* conducted a small dispensary. He was subsidised to the extent of Rs. 180 through the panchayat, the whole amount being the contribution of one of the panchayatdars. I found on inspection that this institution was popular. The Hebri panchayat (South Kanara district) subsidised a registered medical practitioner who visits the village once a week. These cases are sufficient to show that it is possible to make villagers find money for medical relief in the village provided that a substantial contribution can be expected from the local boards or the Government or both.

22. The cleansing of streets and public places is attended to in a number of panchayat areas by sweepers paid out of panchayat funds. But, in the great majority of them, it is reported that the cleansing of streets is as usual attended to by the house-holders and that the cleansing of public places is done periodically by communal labour. The results have however not been as satisfactory as one would expect, but a few panchayats made attempts during the year to organize this individual and communal labour and to ensure that it was done regularly. In villages the sweeping and cleansing of the street in front of each house is done every day by the inmates of the house or at their expense. What is neglected is the removal of the sweepings so collected to a common place and the cleansing of public places other than streets. One panchayat in the North Arcot district organized this work efficiently without resorting to the levy of a tax or the employment of special staff. The streets were divided among the panchayatdars. Each of these divided the work of collecting the street sweepings and carting them to a common place among the residents of occupied houses in the street. It was the duty of each such resident on the days allotted to him to do the collecting and carting himself or hire labour for doing so. Omission on his part to do so entailed a money payment out of which the panchayat hired the labour necessary for carrying out the work. In many villages, the custom of getting public places cleaned periodically by the village vettiyans and of remunerating them by arrangements for feeding them, or for paying *meras* to them

at harvest time, still subsists but it is enforced spasmodically. The first attempt at regularizing a custom of this kind was made during the year by the village panchayat of Sanapa in the Anantapur district.

23. The necessity of removing prickly-pear from and around the natham and from cart-tracks, foot-paths, drinking-water tanks and other public places was repeatedly impressed on panchayats and a large number of them did much clearance work. More, however, yet remains to be done. Barring a few panchayats which levied taxes or contributions for this work, the bulk of it was removed by communal labour mobilised or paid for under the kudimaramat system.

24. Private scavenging fees were levied only in three panchayat areas. Private latrines are practically non-existent in villages. A few panchayats constructed and maintained public latrines while others particularly in the Telugu districts took steps to provide latrine grounds specially for women.

25. Two panchayats helped the plague staff and took precautionary measures against plague. Several co-operated in checking the spread of cholera. Under the orders issued in G.O. No 832, P.H., dated 23rd May 1923, the presidents and members of panchayats are expected to help in the work of vaccination. Wherever they were notified and their help was sought, panchayats did this work willingly.

26. The check of the village headman's returns of vital statistics is another of the important functions of panchayats (G.O. No. 1347, P.H., dated 11th August 1923). A large number of panchayats have been doing this work quietly every month. A considerable number however complained that the village headman was not submitting the returns regularly or would not show the birth and death registers themselves to the panchayat to enable it efficiently to scrutinize the returns. Government have been separately addressed on this matter. The check of these returns by panchayats has disclosed errors and omissions in some cases and these were duly reported to the authorities concerned.

27. In a few cases, the duty of attending to sanitary arrangements during festivals attracting crowds in villages has been entrusted by taluk boards to panchayats. In others, taluk boards have refused to do so sometimes on account of the importance or largeness of the festival, more often in view of the largeness of the income involved.

28. During the year the Madras Towns Nuisances Act was in force in 33 panchayat areas. During the year under report, the Government passed orders directing that the fines levied by magistrates and panchayat courts for offences committed under the Towns Nuisances Act in panchayat limits should be credited to the panchayats concerned and as a result 239 other panchayats applied during the current year for the extension of the Act to their limits.

29. The protection and supply of good drinking water have claimed the attention of a large number of panchayats, and a few of them paid special attention to the needs of Adi-Dravidas. Small repairs to tanks and wells have been carried out almost everywhere. Special taxes have been levied in several panchayat areas for clearance and removal of silt from the beds of drinking water tanks and for the employment of watchmen to protect them from contamination. In some cases where watchmen had been previously employed by taluk boards, their pay has been made over to the panchayat fund as a contribution. Notable examples of heavy taxation for improvement of drinking water sources are—

(1) The Korukollu Panchayat (Kistna district) levied a tax of Re. 1 per acre and realized Rs. 1,500 on the 1,500 acres of occupied land in the village; and the tank was brought into excellent condition before the end of the year.

(2) The Kunnam Panchayat (Tanjore district) raised Rs. 1,063 locally by a similar tax on land and obtained a contribution of Rs. 859 from the taluk board. It spent during the year Rs. 1,813 on the improvement of the principal drinking water tank and Rs. 30 on sinking a new well.

If only Government grants had been made available in the year equal in amount to what the panchayats were prepared to find, it should have been possible to spend a large amount on the improvement of water-supply during the year under report in panchayat areas.

30. The number of panchayats to which functions in respect of village irrigation works were formally transferred by Government under section 18 of the Act was only two. But what the villagers are most keen on in irrigated tracts is the performance in time of the customary kudimaramat work and the fieldwar distribution of water. The obligation for a due performance of these duties rests on the body of ayacutdars and at their request—embodied in resolutions passed by them at meetings convened for the purpose—a large number of panchayats have under section 19 of the Act taken over the enforcement of these obligations. Nearly every panchayat for instance in the Nannilam Taluk Board area is attending to this work which in many villages had been long neglected and whose efficient performance during the year under report has been passport to the spread of panchayats in that area. The kudimaramat obligation is enforced by means of a tax in money or kind—sanctioned under section 26 (2) of the Act—at so much per acre, with the proviso added that, if labour is supplied of such quantity and at such time as the panchayat may require, the tax shall not be collected. Some panchayats have employed special *niranikkams* for regulating under their supervision the distribution of water. Others use the ordinary village servants remunerating them at harvest time according to custom.

31. Under section 15 (viii) of the Act, panchayats are entitled, if they so choose, to exercise control over cattle stands, threshing floors, topes and other communal p rambokes, Government having the right merely to frame the rules subject to which the control should be exercised. The rules issued in G.O. No. 928, L. & M., dated 9th April 1924, require the approval of the District Collector to a transfer of the poramboke to the panchayat before the latter could exercise any control, and, subject to the annual payment to Government of the five years' average revenue to Government from such porambokes, declared the panchayat entitled to the usufruct of trees and the sale-proceeds of withered and windfallen trees on porambokes so transferred. In the executive instructions subsequently issued by the Board of of Revenue for the working of these rules by Collectors, a distinction was drawn between communal and State porambokes and Collectors were instructed not to transfer the latter to panchayats nor even communal porambokes which happened to contain a large number of fruit trees, palmyras, etc. The result was that a large number of applications from panchayats for transfer of porambokes was pending with the Revenue Department and Collectors have since found themselves unable in several cases to transfer porambokes of any value to panchayats.

32. Section 17 of the Act has practically remained a dead letter. The only order passed by Government under that section is the one transferring the Ramasamudra Kadu to the Karkal Village Panchayat in the South Kanara district and it is doubtful if even this transfer could have been secured but for the fact that the area was under the control of the Revenue Department and had been under the management of an informal panchayat previously. A number of requests from statutory panchayats for the transfer of village forests to them under the usual conditions has failed to enlist the support of the Forest Department. In three cases where there were both a general and a forest panchayat in the same village and both passed resolutions to the effect that the separate forest panchayat might cease to exist and that the forest might be transferred to the general panchayat, it was found not possible to obtain the concurrence of the Forest Department to these resolutions.

33. With the consent of the taluk boards concerned, some panchayats opened markets and slaughter-houses of their own or took over the supervision of taluk board markets and slaughter-houses. The control and supervision of premises licensed under section 193 and schedule VII of the Madras Local Boards Act have been made over to a few by taluk boards.

34. Several panchayats have made arrangements and raised taxes for employing staff for the protection of standing crops and other property. The *pattikaval* system has in this connexion been revived in the Tanjore district and placed on a satisfactory legal footing by not a few panchayats. The Mudikondan Panchayat, for instance, employed a staff of six watchmen who were paid 220 kalams of paddy (worth about Rs. 700 in 1924-25) for the year. This was raised by means of a tax in kind of $2\frac{1}{4}$ marakkals ($4\frac{1}{2}$ Madras measures) of paddy (equivalent to nine annas in money) per acre of wet land in the village.

35. The Decentralization Commission recommended that, when panchayats came to be established in villages, the control of, and the income from, cattle pounds might be safely transferred to them. In G.O. No. 1410, L. & M., dated 2nd October 1915, in which Government issued instructions for the establishment of informal panchayats, this was one of the functions which they declared themselves prepared to transfer to such panchayats. Under section 15 of the Madras Village Panchayat Act, the discretion to exercise functions in regard to the control of pounds is vested by law in panchayats, Government being given the power only to frame rules to regulate the exercise of such control. Proposals made by me to Government in regard to the framing of such rules in 1922 did not meet with their approval. After protracted correspondence on the subject, I was, in G.O. No. 2143, L. & M., dated 28th September 1923, instructed to inform such of the panchayats as applied to me for the transfer of cattle pounds that the Government were not *at present* prepared to sanction such a transfer. The requests which had been received from a large number of panchayats for transfer of pounds up to that date had to be turned down in pursuance of this Government Order. During the year under report, 26 requests of the kind from panchayats scattered over 11 districts which were apparently made to me in ignorance of the policy of the Government had also to be turned down in pursuance of the same Government Order.

36. Individual panchayats have interested themselves in a variety of other activities as well. The revival of *puja* and *festivals* in village temples and their repair and renovation have engaged the attention of many. Some panchayats have even asked for the management of temples with duly appointed trustees to be made over to them. A few panchayats have asked for powers to regulate encroachments on nattams, or for help in extending house-site. The Virapandiyanpatnam Village Panchayat (Tinnevelly district) provided 15 Adi-Dravida families and 22 other poor families with house-site. During the disastrous floods in Tanjore district, the Kunnam panchayat distributed relief to the Adi-Dravida families in distress, gave them food and permitted them to live in high level patta lands. The Mudianur panchayat in the South Arcot district resolved to take steps to improve the breed of buffaloes and applied for the supply of a buffalo breeding bull offering to pay half its price and the cost of its maintenance The Government finally informed me that no such bull was available. One panchayat in the Anantapur district arranged for agricultural demonstrations by officers of the Agricultural department. Several panchayats participated in the National Health and Baby Week Celebrations.

37. The possibilities of reviving, on modern lines and with modern sanctions, the organized life of the old South Indian village as an agricultural community and its self-sufficiency for ordinary agricultural purposes are great even at the present day. The first step in this direction was attempted during the year under report and had reference to the regulation and proper remuneration of the recognized village servants including artizans—e.g., carpenter, blacksmith, washerman, barber, potter, madiga, etc. The services that they are by custom liable to render to the village community are fixed in the shape of by-laws and the *meras* customarily payable to them are made legally enforceable against the ryots in the shape of fees sanctioned under section 26 (2) of the Act. This system was begun for the first time in the Sanapa panchayat (Anantapur district) towards the close of the year under report. It is now welcomed and is becoming popular in several villages.

38. Proceeding to the question of finance, mention has first to be made of the fact that not a single rupee had up to the end of the year under report left the provincial exchequer in aid of the funds of any panchayat.

39. Help in sundry ways was received by a number of panchayats from taluk boards but the aggregate amount has been small. According to the figures available at present in my office, the total contribution from the taluk boards was only Rupees 5,635-13-0 during the year under report.

40. Panchayats which have shown activity have thus largely almost solely, had to depend upon themselves. While this state of things has necessarily slowed the pace of progress of the panchayat organization, it has had, on such panchayats as have shown active work, the healthy effect of rising above and conquering the dispiriting conditions under which they at present have to work.

Mudaliyar, M.L.C. The resolutions passed at the conferences were sent to the Government but the orders passed on the more important of them have been received by panchayats with some disappointment.

18. The work of organizing and developing panchayats has been done against odds. There is the initial apathy of the villagers. They have during the past century come to look outside the village for everything. The restoration of a feeling of self-reliance to people who have been nurtured in a tradition of helplessness is an uphill task. The panchayat impinges against vested interests of all kinds, official and unofficial. Its powers and prestige have to be built up in the main by taking away slices of power and prestige from those—both in and out of the village—in whom they are vested now. It has therefore to contend against opposition and, if many of the panchayats have not shown the activity which could be expected of them, it is due to causes of this kind. But it is easy to surmount these by no means insuperable difficulties if we remedy the defects in the existing Act, if we link the panchayat more closely with departments of the general administration and if we enlist the services of a band of genuine honorary workers. A number of honorary organizers have been appointed and several of them have done good work. Without meaning any disparagement to certain other honorary organizers who have also done well, I would single out for prominent mention in this connexion the excellence of the results achieved during the year by Mr. V. Janikirama Ayyar of Vellore, Mr. C. Samundi Gounder of Nattarampalle, Mr. M. R. Sambasiva Ayyar of Nannilam, Rao Sahib M. Kulandaivelu Udaiyar of Mudianur and Mr. R. Ananda Rao of Tiruttangal. It is, however, too much to expect honorary workers to put themselves out of pocket for any length of time even in a cause like this. Panchayats, thanks to the assistance I have received from honorary organizers and from taluk board presidents like Mr. H. Siva Rao of Anantapur, Rao Bahadur K. Krishnaswami Nayudu of Vellore, Mr. B. T. Seshadriachariyar of Tiruppattur, Mr. A. V. Srinivasalu Reddiyar of Tindivanam, Mr. Thiruthavathasan of Melur and Mr. C. Maruthavanam Pillai of Nannilam, have come to stay; they are destined to play a large and increasing part in the future of the country. It is necessary, however, even at this early stage to organize the work connected with them on more efficient lines than now. The matter has already begun to attract attention and it is to be hoped that a satisfactory solution will soon be arrived at.

Order—No. 2645, L. & M., dated 22nd June 1926.

Recorded.

2. The Government have read with interest the first report of the Registrar-General on the working of panchayats and are glad to be able to congratulate him and many of the panchayats on the useful work already done.

The Government consider that it is especially a matter for congratulation that the chief results have been accomplished largely by means of the unaided resources of the panchayats themselves.

3. The Registrar-General is requested to append to the administration reports submitted by him in future a statement containing information as to the total amount realized by the panchayats from the several sources of revenue, the total expenditure therefrom and the objects on which the expenditure was incurred.

4. The annual report on the taxes levied by the panchayats called for in G.O. No. 94, L. & M., dated 7th January 1926, should in future be submitted with the administration reports.

(By order of the Government, Ministry of Local Self-Government)

C. B. COTTERELL,
Secretary to Government.

To the Registrar-General of Panchayats.
,, Revenue Department.
,, Development Department.
Editors' Table.

41. Panchayats have first attempted to garner all the sources of communal income available by custom in the village. Cattle-droppings in public places, *velal* grass in tank beds, the right to gather babul pods, the leavings in groundnut fields, the grazing of ducks on harvested fields, fisheries and silt in drinking water ponds—these and similar items are sold in auction and the proceeds appropriated to panchayat funds. Several panchayats in the Tanjore district have taken over the management on behalf of the village community of the samudhayam lands which yield a considerable income.

42. The variety of taxes and fees which at request of panchayats have been sanctioned for levy under the Act, has been a matter for agreeable surprise. Many forms of customary payment including *meras* have been made legally enforceable in this way. It is not necessary to burden this report with a full description and analysis of these taxes and fees. A printed list has already been submitted to Government in my R. Dis. No. 458, dated 3rd October 1925. Up to the end of the year under report, the levy of taxes and fees of various kinds had been sanctioned in 117 panchayat areas but in many other areas the customary levies were being made without sanction. These latter have been informed from time to time that if the levies are not sanctioned under the Act the provisions for compulsory recovery cannot be enforced against defaulters They have been since applying for sanction one after another. It would, however, be a mistake to suppose that panchayats which did not apply for sanctioning the levy of tax or fee did no work. The income from sources other than taxation has sufficed in several cases. Nattarampalli (North Arcot district) which is one of the most progressive panchayats levied, for instance, no tax or fee at all. Its activities which required expenditure of money cost during the year Rs. 1,300 and it found the whole of this amount from donations from the villagers, from its income from the market and fishery and from taluk board contributions.

43. The experience so far justifies the conclusion that it is not difficult to persuade villagers to tax themselves provided we convince them—

(*a*) that the money so raised will be entirely spent in the village,

(*b*) that they will be left free to choose the form and the rate of taxation subject to reasonable control and

(*c*) that they will not thereby be called upon to pay for services which the Government or the local boards are now bound to find money for.

There is naturally an initial disinclination to levy any tax but even this could be more easily got over than now if the temptation of some definite contribution from Government or local funds could be held out.

44. The money transactions of panchayats which did work during the year have varied from Rs. 26 to Rs. 4,803.

45. The funds of panchayats have been lodged in postal savings banks and with my sanction in co-operative societies or with presidents or panchayatdars. Some panchayats in the Sivakasi Taluk Board area have been permitted to follow the custom previously in vogue in villages of lending out such portion of their balance as is not wanted immediately for expenditure for short periods of one and two months to the highest bidder among the villagers at an auction held for the purpose. This system is helpful to villagers who want temporary accommodation till they are able to sell their crops and realise a handsome rate of interest for the panchayat.

46. Arrangements were made for auditing the accounts of panchayats which functioned during the year. Honorary organizers were employed for this purpose wherever they were available. In a few cases, presidents of taluk boards themselves carried out the audit. In fewer cases, officers of the Revenue and Registration Departments were authorized to audit the panchayat accounts with the consent of the heads of departments concerned. In other cases, non-officials were specially appointed as honorary auditors on the recommendation of the presidents of taluk boards. The reviews on the audit reports relating to 111 panchayats have issued up to date. No serious irregularities have been brought to notice.

47. Two panchayat conferences were held during the year. The first held at Nattarampalle in July 1924 was opened by the Hon'ble the Chief Minister. The second held at Anantapur in November 1924 was presided over by Mr. A. Ranganatha

APP. F. VI. Gl.]

7

SUBJECT.....

.....

.....

Section LB,

File No.

Serial No

No. X 1118.

Diary No. of letter replied to... 679

To

.....

General and Revenue Secretariat
(LB)
the *192*

Dear Sir,

I am desired to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the copy of the administration report of the village Panchayats in the Madras Presidency for 1924-25, sent with your letter no 22832-1 Agr L & Mk. dated 7th instant.

Yours Sincerely

Date of issue... 14/8/26

Signed by... M. T. K.-S

List of enclosures.....

Copied by.....

Examined by.....

To

The Asst Secy to the Govt of Madras.

over

L. S. S. Dept

WD 01265—GPB—31,000—24-12-25

send w/f

83
12/8.26

LPS 26-26—84

Proceedings of the Govt. of H.H. the Maharaja of Mysore.

Order No. L30 32-9

Dated, Bangalore, 12th Nov 1926

Government have perused the report of the Registrar-General of Panchayets on the administration of Village Panchayets in the Madras Presidency for the year 1924-25. They consider that the report contains several interesting features which may with advantage be brought to the notice of the Panchayets which will be constituted in the State ~~shortly~~ under the Mysore Village Panchayets Regulation, 1926.

2. All officers entrusted with the work of guiding the Panchayets in their work are requested to carefully note the items in the accompanying extract from the report and to bring, during their tours, to the notice of the Panchayets or the Chairman the important points contained in the extract, ~~from the report~~.

3. The Deputy Commissioners are requested to arrange for the supply to each Panchayet of a copy of this order together with the extract from the report in Kannada and intimate at once the number of copies required, to the Superintendent, Govt. Press.

L & L Secy. to Govt.

The Deputy Commrs. of Districts.
The Superintendent, Government Press.
The Heads of Departments.

copy to: Translation Section
Print

The (marginally noted) accompanying Extracts from the Report on the administration of Village P.s in the Madras Presy for the year 1924-25 are published for the information of the P.S that will be constituted in Mysore from 1st Oct 1927.

The Dcs are requested to obtain direct from the Supdt. of the G.P. Kannada Press Copies of the Extracts for distribution to the Panchayets.

The Panchayets should be advised to peruse the Extracts carefully with a view to future action.

The insurance of Govt. money for Govt. Buildings & Establishments & Concerned Funds of the Taluk Village Panchayets for a period of 1 year from 1st Oct 1926 under arrangements now in force will be effected by the Taluk Panchayets DSG.

EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORT OF THE REGISTRAR-GENERAL OF PANCHAYETS ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF VILLAGE PANCHAYETS IN THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY -- DURING THE YEAR 1924-25.

---

x x x

6. The elections held every where have given general satisfaction. In most villages, the voters have proceeded on the principle - well recognized in all village common affairs of each important community being represented on the Panchayet. In many places, by previous informal agreement, only as many candidates as there are seats have been nominated, all of -- them being declared elected without a poll.

x x x

8. The expenditure on office staff, accomdation and management has been kept at a minimum. The tendancy to employ full-timed clerks and to build or rent accommodation for the location of the Panchayet office or the holding of meetings has been steadily discouraged. Panchayets have been instructed to hold their meetings and office in a place accessible to all communities. The Board Elementary school, the village chavadi a public chatram, the platform under the village banyan tree, the space in front of a village -- temple, the president's house - these and --- similar places are used for meetings. -------

K.T.S

20

The scriptory work of panchayets is small; the forms and accounts prescribed are few and simple. They are in the great majority of panchayets done without any remuneration by the President or a Panchayetdar. Where the volume of writing work in individual cases was found to be more than could be managed in this way, it was generally done by the local karnam or schoolmaster for a small remuneration not exceeding Rs.5 a month. Full-timed clerks are employed, however, by a few panchayets, especially in areas where they have replaced unions under the Madras Local Boards Act. 1920.

9. Except in about seven cases, no bill-collectors or other staff are employed by panchayets for collection work. All of them have now begun to use the village headmen - under the Village Panchayet Collection Rules - either for collecting all their dues or for realising the arrears due from defaulters only. × × × ×

11. Many panchayets attended during the year to the repair of village streets and roads and to the clearance of prickly-pear which had overwhelmed and practically obliterated village foot-paths and cart-tracks. These clearances and repairs have been largely executed by mobilising village labour on the kudimaramath principle. Special taxes have been levied by some panchayets for specified works. For example, owners of carts were taxed in one village for financing the construction of culverts. One panchayet raised a tax on houses for meeting the cost of doing the earthwork required for a new

21

road. All cultivated lands were laid under -- contribution for a similar purpose, in certain ~~panchayats~~ other panchayet areas. ~~The maintenan~~ ~~of maintained village roads was taken over by~~ certain other panchayets, the usual allotments being made over to them as a contribution by the taluk board concerned. One panchayet undertook on behalf of the taluk board the execution of the work of repairing a road seriously damaged by -- floods and of forming a new road and during the year did work to the value of Rs.2,098/-.

14. Panchayets had not during the year begun active work in the direction of planting avenue trees. Coconut plants were planted in village streets in stray cases and one panchayet in the Tinnevelly district had planted and was carefully rearing a series of margosa trees in its streets which are otherwise bare of any vegetation. The transfer of terms agreed upon of trees on district and taluk board roads to panchayets within their limits has been advised. One panchayet in North Arcot applied for such a transfer during the year undertaking to pay annually to the district board its average income from such trees during the previous five years.

13. The provision of lighting at nights has not yet become general among panchayets. Several of them have however provided this convenience, and different panchayets have adopted different devices for meeting the cost of this service. One panchayet alone levied a special tax on the -- residents for this purpose. In a considerable

22

number, the cost of lighting was met out of the general resources of the panchayet as in unions. In a few areas, lamp posts and lights have been received as gifts from the well-to-do, the cost of looking after, maintaining and -- lighting the lamps being thrown on the residents of the streets served by particular lamps.

14. The number of panchayets which have taken over the control of chatrams and chavadies is - yet small but is bound to grow. One panchayet in South Kanara is managing a chatram and levying fees for its occupation. Another in South Arcot has applied for the transfer of the assets of a disused choultry for the purpose of improving water-supply and providing lighting in the village.

~~15. A large number of panchayets exercised such supervision and several of them brought about both increase in strength and -- improvement in efficiency in the institutions entrusted to them. The panchayet of Nattarampa in the North Arcot District was formost in this respect. It provided at its own cost an extension of the school building, spent sums frequenly for small items of improvement, took an -- intelligent interest and displayed helpful -- activity in the progress of the institution - which is a Higher Grade Elementary School with nine teachers.~~ Another panchayet ~~in the same district~~ was entrusted with the supervision of a board school the strength of which did not justify the employment of even half the number of teachers that were actually employed therein. The panchayetdars hit upon a novel but effective

device for increasing the strength. With the ~~pupils~~ teachers and pupils of the institution they started in procession after a bath, dressed in clean cloths, wearing each his caste mark conspicuously on his forehead and with the village band playing in front. As they went round the streets, they stopped at each house and if after inquiry they found a boy of school-going age not attending school a garland was placed round his neck and he was made to join the procession. When they reached the school-house, the boys with the garlands on, were formally -- enrolled as pupils of the institution and it was found that the strength of the school was thereby increased by more than 50 per cent. × × ×

20. A few panchayets maintained libraries and one of them which subscribes for newspapers and periodicals regularly circulated them to - five other panchayets in the neighbourhood.

✓21 × × × ×

~~30~~. The Tiruppandiyur panchayet in the -- Chingleput district opened a dispensary in charge of a retired compounder during the last quarter of the year and about 150 persons are reported to have been treated during the period for -- minor ailments and injuries. The amount spent by the panchayet during the year was -- Rs.10-7-6. This dispensary has also languished during the current year for lack of outside -- support. Under the auspices of the Ambalur - panchayet (North Arcot district) a village -- yaidyam conducted a small dispensary. He was subsidised to the extent of Rs.180 through the panchayet, the whole amount being the contribution of one of the panchayetdars. I found on

inspection that this institution was popular. The Hebri panchayet (South Kanara district) subsidised a registered medical practitioner who visits the village once a week. These cases are sufficient to show that it is possibl to make villagers find money for medical relief in the village provided that a substantial contribution can be expected from the local boards or the Boyernment or both.

22. The cleansing of streets and public places is attended to in a number of panchayet areas by sweepers paid out of panchayet funds. But, in the great majority of them, it is reported that the cleansing of streets is as usual attended to by the house-holders and that the cleansing of public places is done periodically by communal labour. The results have however not been as satisfactory as one would expect, but a few panchayets made attempts during the year to organize this individual and communal labour and to ensure that it was done regularly. In villages the sweeping and cleansing of the street in front of each house is done every day by the inmates of the house or at their expense. What is neglected is the removal of the sweeping so collected to a common place and the cleansing of public places other than streets. One Panchayet in the North Arcot district organised this work efficiently without resorting to the levy of a tax or the employment of special staff. The streets were divided among the panchayetdars Each of these divided the work of collecting the street sweepings and carting them to a common place among the residents of occupied houses in the street. It was the duty of each such resident on the days allotted to him to do

the collecting and carting himself or hire labour for doing so. Omission on his part to do so entailed a money payment out of which the panchayet hired the labour necessary for carrying out the work. In many villages, the custom of getting public places cleaned periodically by the village vettiyans and of remunerating them by arrangements for feeding them, or for paying meras to them at harvest time, still subsists ~~but it is enforced spasmodically~~. The ~~first attempt at regularising a custom of this kind was made during the year by the village panchayet of Sanapa in the Anantapur district.~~

23. ~~12~~. The necessity of removing prickly-pear from and around the natham and from cart-tracks, foot-paths, drinking-water tanks and other public places was repeatedly impressed on panchayets and a large number of them did much clearance work. More, however, yet remains to be done. Barring a few panchayets which levied taxes or contributions for this work, the bulk of it was removed by communal labour mobilised or paid for under the kudimaramat system.

24 ~~13~~. Private scavenging fees were levied only in three panchayet areas. Private latrines are practically non-existent in villages. A few panchayets constructed and maintained public latrines while others particularly in the Telugu districts took steps to provide latrine grounds specially for women.

25 ~~24~~. The protection and supply of good drinking water have claimed the attention of a large number of panchayets, and a few of them paid special attention to the needs of Adi-Dravidas.

Small repairs to tanks and wells have been carried out almost everywhere. Special taxes have been levied in serveral panchayet areas - for clearance and removal of slit from the beds of drinking water tanks and for the employ ment of watchmen to protect them from contamination.

34. ~~15~~. Several panchayets have made arrangements and raised taxes for employing staff for the protection of standing crops and other property. The pattikaval system has in this connection been revived in the Tanjore district and placed on a satisfactory legal footing by not a few panchayets. The Mudikonadat Panchaye for instance, employed a staff of six watchmen who were paid 220 kalams of paddy (worth about Rs.700 in 1924-25) for the year. This was -- raised by means of a tax in kind of 2¼ marakkals (4½ Madras measures) of paddy (equivalent to nine annas in money) per acre of wet land in the village.

36. ~~16~~. ~~Individual panchayets have interested themselves in a variety of other activities as well~~. The revival of puja and festivals in village temples and their repair and renovation have engaged the attention of many. Some panchayets have even asked for the management of temples with duly appointed trustees to be made over to them.

37. The possibilities of reviving, on -- modern lines and with modern sanctions, the organized life of the old South Indian village as an agricultural community and its self-sufficiency for ordinary agricultural purposes

27

are great even at the present day. The first step in this direction was attempted during the year under report and had reference to the regulation and proper remuneration of the recognised village servants including artizans- e.g. carpenter, blacksmith, washerman, barber, potter madiga, etc., The services that they are by custom liable to render to the village community are fixed in the shape of bye-laws and the meras customarily payable to them are made legally enforceable against the ryots in the shape of ~~bye-laws~~ fees sanctioned under section 26 (2) of the Act. This system was begun for the first time in the Sanapa panchayet (Anantapur district towards the close of the year under report. It is now welcomed and is becoming popular in -- several villages.

38. Proceeding to the question of finance, mention has first to be made of the fact - that not a single rupee had up to the end of year under report left the provincial exchequer in aid of the funds of any panchayet.

x x x x

40. Panchayets which have shown activity have thus largely almost solely, had to depend upon themselves. While this state of things - has necessarily showed the place of progress of the panchayet organization, it has had, on such panchayets as have shown active work, the -- healthy effect of rising above and conquering the dispiriting conditions under which they at present have to work.

41. Panchayets have first attempted to garner all the sources of communal income available by custom in the village. Cattle-dropping

28

in public places, velal grass in tank beds, the right to gather babul pods, the leavings in groun -nut fields, the grazing of ducks on harvested -- fields, fisheries and silt in drinking water pond these and similar items are sold in auction and the proceeds appropriated to panchayet funds. Several panchayets in the Tanjore district have taken over the management on behalf of the village community of the samudhayam lands which yiel a considerable income.

42. 21. The variety of taxes and fees which at request of panchayets have been sanctioned for levy under the Act, has been a matter for agreeable surprise. Many forms of customary payment including meras have been made legally enforceable in this way. It is not necessary to burden this -- report with a full description and analysis of these taxes and fees.

43. 22. The experience so far justifies the conclusion that it is not difficult to persuade villagers to tax themselves provided we convince them -

(a) that the money so raised will be entirely spent in the village,

(b) that they will be left free to choose the form and the rate of taxation subject to reasonable control and

(c) that they will not thereby be called upon to pay for services which the Government or the local boards are now bound to find money for. -

There is naturally an initial disinclination to levy any tax but even this could be more easily got over than now if the temptation of some defini contribution from Government or local funds could be held out.

No. L. 3032-9—L. B. 26-26-84, DATED 12TH NOVEMBER 1926.

34. Several panchayets have made arrangements and raised taxes for employing staff for the protection of standing crops and other property. The *pattikaval* system has in this connection been revived in the Tanjore District and placed on a satisfactory legal footing by not a few panchayets. The Mudikondan Panchayet for instance, employed a staff of six watchmen who were paid 220 kalams of paddy (worth about Rs. 700 in 1924-25) for the year. This was raised by means of a tax in kind of 2¼ marakkal (4½ Madras measures) of paddy (equivalent to nine annas in money) per acre of wet land in the village.

* * * * *

36. The revival of *puja* and *festivals* in village temples and their repair and renovation have engaged the attention of many. Some panchayets have even asked for the management of temples with duly appointed trustees to be made over to them.

* * * * *

37. The possibilities of reviving, on modern lines and with modern sanctions, the organized life of the old South Indian Village as an agricultural community and its self-sufficiency for ordinary agricultural purposes are great even at the present day. The first step in this direction was attempted during the year under report and had reference to the regulation and proper remuneration of the recognised village servants including artisans, *e.g.*, carpenter, blacksmith, washerman, barber, potter, madiga, etc. The services that they are by custom liable to render to the village community are fixed in the shape of bye-laws and the *meras* customarily payable to them are made legally enforceable against the raiyats in the shape of fees sanctioned under Section 26 (2) of the Act. This system was begun for the first time in the Sanapa panchayet (Anantapur District) towards the close of the year under report. It is now welcomed and is becoming popular in several villages.

38. Proceeding to the question of finance, mention has first to be made of the fact that not a single rupee had up to the end of the year under report left the provincial exchequer in aid of the funds of any panchayet.

* * * * *

40. Panchayets which have shown activity have thus largely, almost solely, had to depend upon themselves. While this state of things has necessarily showed the place of progress of the panchayet organization, it has had, on such panchayets as have shown active work, the healthy effect of rising above and conquering the dispiriting conditions under which they at present have to work.

41. Panchayets have first attempted to garner all the sources of communal income available by custom in the village. Cattle droppings in public places, *velal* grass in tank beds, the right to gather babul pods, the leavings in groundnut fields, the grazing of ducks on harvested fields, fisheries and silt in drinking water ponds—these and simlar items are sold in auction and the proceeds appropriated to panchayet funds. Several panchayets in the Tanjore District have taken over the management on behalf of the village community of the samudhayam lands which yield a considerable income.

42. The variety of taxes and fees which at request of panchayets have been sanctioned for levy under the Act, has been a matter for agreeable surprise. Many forms of customary payment including *meras* have been made legally enforceable in this way.

43. The experience so far justifies the conclusion that it is not difficult to persuade villagers to tax themselves provided we convince them

(*a*) that the money so raised will be entirely spent in the Village ;

(*b*) that they will be left free to choose the form and the rate of taxation subject to reasonable control ; and

(*c*) that they will not thereby be called upon to pay for services which the Government or the local boards are now bound to find money for.

WD 1006—GPB 535—20-11-26

Government of His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore.

GENERAL AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

G. O. No. L. 3032-9—L. B. 26-26-84, dated 12th November 1926.

Administration of Village Panchayets.

Publishes extracts from the Report on the —— in the Madras Presidency for the ormation of the Village Panchayets in the State.

ORDER NO. L. 3032-9—L. B. 26-26-84, DATED 12TH NOVEMBER 1926.

The accompanying extracts from the Report on the Administration of Village Panchayets in the Madras Presidency for the year 1924-25 are proposed to be published for the information of the Village Panchayets that would be constituted in Mysore from 1st February 1927.

The Deputy Commissioners are requested to obtain direct from the Superintendent of the Government Printing a sufficient number of Kannada copies of the extracts for distribution to the Panchayets.

The Panchayetdars should be advised to peruse these extracts carefully with a view to future action.

The importance of not wasting money on establishments and of conserving the funds of the poorer Village Panchayets for a series of years with a view to undertaking some work of real utility should also be brought home to the Panchayets.

for Secretary to Government,
Local and Legislative Departments.

To—The Deputy Commissioners of Districts.
The Superintendent, Government Press, Bangalore.
The Heads of Departments.

Exd.—P. R. S. N.

16. Another panchayet was entrusted with the supervision of a board school the strength of which did not justify the employment of even half the number of teachers that were actually employed therein. The panchayetdars hit upon a novel but effective device for increasing the strength. With the teachers and pupils of the institution they started in procession after a bath, dressed in clean clothes, wearing each his caste mark conspicuously on his forehead and with the village band playing in front. As they went round the streets, they stopped at each house and if after inquiry they found a boy of school-going age not attending school, a garland was placed round his neck and he was made to join the procession. When they reached the school house, the boys with the garlands on, were formally enrolled as pupils of the institution and it was found that the strength of the school was thereby increased by more than 50 per cent.

* * * * *

20. A few panchayets maintained libraries and one of them which subscribes for newspapers and periodicals regularly circulated them to five other panchayets in the neighbourhood.

* * * * *

21. The Tiruppandiyur panchayet in the Chingleput District opened a dispensary in charge of a retired compounder during the last quarter of the year and about 150 persons are reported to have been treated during the period for minor ailments and injuries. The amount spent by the panchayet during the year was Rs. 10-7-6. This dispensary has also languished during the current year for lack of outside support. Under the auspices of the Ambalur panchayet (North Arcot District) a village *Vaidyan* conducted a small dispensary. He was subsidised to the extent of Rs. 180-0-0 through the panchayet, the whole amount being the contribution of one of the panchayetdars. I found on inspection that this institution was popular. The Hebri panchayet (South Kanara District) subsidised a registered medical practitioner who visits the village once a week.

* * * * *

22. The cleansing of streets and public places is attended to in a number of panchayet areas by sweepers paid out of panchayet funds. But, in the great majority of them, it is reported that the cleansing of streets is as usual attended to by the householders and that the cleansing of public places is done periodically by communal labour,

* * * * *

In villages the sweeping and cleaning of the street in front of each house is done every day by the inmates of the house or at their expense. What is neglected is the removal of the sweeping so collected to a common place and the cleaning of public places other than streets. One Panchayet in the North Arcot District organised this work efficiently without resorting to the levy of a tax or the employment of special staff. The streets were divided among the panchayetdars. Each of these divided the work of collecting the street sweeping and carting them to a common place among the residents of occupied houses in the street. It was the duty of each such resident on the days allotted to him to do the collecting and carting himself or hire labour for doing so. Omission on his part to do so entailed a money payment out of which the panchayet hired the labour necessary for carrying out the Work. In many villages, the custom of getting public places cleaned periodically by the village vettiyans and of remunerating them by arrangements for feeding them, or for paying *meras* to them at harvest time, still subsists.

* * * * *

23. The necessity of removing prickly-pear from and around the natham and from cart-tracks, footpaths, drinking-water tanks and other public places was repeatedly impressed on panchayets and a large number of them did much clearance work. More, however, yet remains to be done. Barring a few panchayets which levied taxes or contributions for this work, the bulk of it was removed by communal labour mobilised or paid for under the *kudimaramat* system.

24. Private scavenging fees were levied only in three panchayet areas. Private latrines are practically non-existent in villages. A few panchayets constructed and maintained public latrines while others, particularly in the Telugu districts, took steps to provide latrine grounds specially for women.

* * * * *

29. The protection and supply of good drinking water have claimed the attention of a larger number of panchayets, and a few of them paid special attention to the needs of Adi-Dravidas. Small repairs to tanks and wells have been carried out almost everywhere. Special taxes have been levied in seaveral panchayet areas for clearance and removal of silt from the beds of drinking water tanks and for the employment of watchmen to protect them from contamination.

* * * * *

30

No. L. 3032-9—L. B. 26-26-84, DATED 12TH NOVEMBER 1926.

Extracts from the Report of the Registrar-General of Panchayets on the Administration of Village Panchayets in the Madras Presidency during the year 1924-25.

* *

6. The elections held everywhere have given general satisfaction. In most villages, tha voters have proceeded on the principle well recognised in all village common affairs of each important community being represented on the Panchayet. In many places, by previous informal agreement, only as many candidates as there are seats have been nominated, all of them being declared elected without a poll.

8. The expenditure on office staff, accommodation and management has been kept at a minimum. The tendency to employ full-timed clerks and to build or rent accommodation for the location of the Panchayet Office or the holding of meetings has been steadily discouraged. Panchayets have been instructed to hold their meetings and office in a place accessible to all communities. The board elementary school, the village chavadi, a public chattram, the platform under the village banyan tree, the space in front of a village temple, the President's house—these and similar places are used for meetings. The scriptory work of panchayets is small; the forms and accounts prescribed are few and simple. They are in the great majority of panchayets done without any remuneration by the President or a Panchayetdar. Where the volume of writing work in individual cases was found to be more than could be managed in this way, it was generally done by the local *karnam* or schoolmaster for a small remuneration not exceeding Rs. 5 a month. Full-timed clerks are employed, however, by a few panchayets, especially in areas where they have replaced unions under the Madras Local Boards Act, 1920

9. Except in about seven cases, no bill-collectors or other staff are employed, by panchayets for collection work. All of them have now begun to use the village headman under the Village Panchayets Collection Rules either for collecting all their dues or for realising the arrears due from defaulters only.

11. Many panchayets attended during the year to the repair of village streets and roads and to the clearance of prickly-pear which had overwhelmed and practically obliterated village footpaths and cart-tracks. These clearances and repairs have been largely executed by mobilising village labour on the *kudimaramath* principle. Special taxes have been levied by some panchayets for specified works. For example, owners of carts were taxed in one village for financing the construction of culverts. One panchayet raised a tax on houses for meeting the cost of doing the earthwork required for a new road. All cultivated lands were laid under contribution for a similar purpose, in certain other panchayet areas.

12. Panchayets had not, during the year, begun active work in the direction of planting avenue trees. Cocoanut plants were planted in village streets in stray cases and one panchayet in the Tinnevelly District had planted and was carefully rearing a series of margosa trees in its streets which are otherwise bare of any vegetation. The transfer of terms agreed upon of trees on District and Taluk Board roads to panchayets within their limits has been advised. One panchayet in North Arcot applied for such a transfer during the year undertaking to pay annually to the District Board its average income from such trees during the previous five years.

13 The provision of lighting at nights has not yet become general among panchayets. Several of them have, however, provided, this convenience, and different panchayets have adopted different devices for meeting the cost of this service. One panchayet alone levied a special tax on the residents for this purpose. In a considerable number, the cost of lighting was met out of the general resources of the panchayet as in unions. In a few areas, lamp posts and lights have been received as gifts from the well-to-do, the cost of looking after, maintaining and lighting the lamps being thrown on the residents of the streets served by particular lamps.

14. The number of panchayets which have taken over the control of chattrams and chavadies is yet small but is bound to grow. One panchayet in South Kanara is managing a chattram and levying fees for its occupation. Another in South Arcot has applied for the transfer of the assets of a disused choultry for the purpose of improving water-supply and providing lighting in the village.